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RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI  
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA//  
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA//J5/JO21//  
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RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 2594  
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 0119  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 3616  
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 9526  
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DEPT FOR E, P, EB, EAP/J, EAP/P, EAP/PD, PA;  
WHITE HOUSE/NSC/NEC; JUSTICE FOR STU CHEMTOB IN ANTI-TRUST DIVISION;  
TREASURY/OASIA/IMI/JAPAN; DEPT PASS USTR/PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
SECDEF FOR JCS-J-5/JAPAN,  
DASD/ISA/EAPR/JAPAN; DEPT PASS ELECTRONICALLY TO USDA  
FAS/ITP FOR SCHROETER; PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR;  
CINCPAC FLT/PA/ COMNAVFORJAPAN/PA.

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TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 03/08/07

- 1) Top headlines
- 2) Editorials
- 3) Prime Minister's daily schedule

4) Embassy's The American Center formally reopens in new Akasaka location

US-Japan comfort-women row:

- 5) Foreign Ministry plans to rebut in op-ed stinging New York Times editorial critical of Prime Minister Abe for unapologetic view of comfort-women issue
- 6) Government reportedly plans to reinvestigate the comfort-women issue, possibly replace Kono Statement with revised view

Japan-North Korea talks:

- 7) DPRK delegation to bilateral working group rejects discussion of abduction issue, making today's continued talks more difficult to pursue
- 8) North Korea may be deliberately trying to isolate Japan in six-party talks framework

9) Japan at pledging conference ready to provide Africa with 2 billion yen in new aid

Defense issues:

- 10) Cabinet adopts new guidelines for MD-related urgent-response guidelines
- 11) Prime Minister Abe in meeting with panel calls for speedy research on whether Japan can use right of collective self-defense

Abe on the move:

- 12) With gulf widening between Kantei, party, Abe meets former Prime Minister Koizumi, LDP Secretary Hidenao Nakagawa to seek advice
- 13) Abe's replies in the Diet faulted as too long-winded
- 14) Abe pushing for speedy passage of national referendum bill on constitutional reform but opposition Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) in the way
- 15) Abe's policy imprint is all over the national constitutional referendum bill but coalition partner New Komeito balking at early passage

School for scandal:

- 16) Opposition in Diet attacks Abe, education and defense ministers for "taking political contributions from banned organizations"
- 17) Farm Minister Matsuoka refuses to explain to Diet details of his office's high utilities bills, even though such payments are free
- 18) Japanese kids in poll have little interest in studying, compared to kids in China, ROK

## 1) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

Abduction issue halts Japan-DPRK talks on day one; North Korea rejects afternoon session

Mainichi:

Cherry blossoms likely to open early

Yomiuri:

Government plan outlines amakudari ban

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Nihon Keizai:

Aeon, Daiei reach final agreement on capital, operational tie-up

Sankei:

Government to review civil servant "career system" to shift it to merit system

Tokyo Shimbun:

National referendum bill likely to clear Diet in current session

Akahata:

Ruling coalition to forcibly hold committee session today to get national referendum bill pass through Lower House in March

## 2) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

- (1) Nikko-Citigroup deal signifies a fresh start
- (2) Terminal care guidelines essential

Mainichi:

- (1) Adhering to Kono Statement on "comfort women" natural
- (2) Long way for Nikko Cordial to restore trust

Yomiuri:

- (1) Nikko-Citigroup deal a lesson for all
- (2) US-DPRK working group: Removing North Korea from the terrorist-sponsor list depends on Pyongyang

Nihon Keizai:

- (1) US-DPRK talks need substance
- (2) Georgia expected to pursue reform policy

Sankei:

- (1) Citi-Nikko deal: Healthy markets essential
- (2) Upgrading part-time workers to fulltime status: Workplace needs more flexibility

Tokyo Shimbun:

- (1) Nikko-Citigroup deal a first step

(2) Keeping good local scenery essential

Akahata:

(1) The rich do not need tax cuts

3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, March 7

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 8, 2007

09:58

Met at Kantei with Education Minister Ibuki.

10:45

Met with Vice Foreign Minister Yachi.

12:00

Met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shimomura and Assistant Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Saka. Had lunch with LDP Lower House

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members now serving in their first-term in the Diet.

14:25

Met with LDP Policy Research Council Chairman Nakagawa.

15:01

Met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matoba, followed by Special Advisor Seko and Cabinet Public Relations Secretary Hasegawa.

16:07

Met with LDP Secretary General Nakagawa. Responded to interview by reporters attached to the cabinet.

18:07

Met with former Finance Minister Shiokawa and International University President Mineo Nakajima, later joined by Ibuki and Special Advisor Yamatani, at the Union Club in Tokyo Kaikan.

19:00

Dined with former Prime Minister Koizumi and Secretary General Nakagawa at the French restaurant in Imperial Hotel.

20:43

Returned to his official residence.

4) Opening ceremony of Tokyo American Center

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)  
March 8, 2007

The opening ceremony of the Tokyo American Center, which provides a variety of US information, including US government-issued publications, was held yesterday at the new office (in Akasaka, Minato Ward, Tokyo). In the ceremony, Ambassador Thomas Schieffer stated: "I hope the (new office) will help the US and Japan deepen mutual understanding." Kuniko Inoguchi, former state minister in charge of the declining birthrate, and Heizo Takenaka, former internal affairs and communications minister, attended the ceremony.

5) Foreign Ministry plans to ask New York Times for space to rebut its stinging editorial on comfort-women issue

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 8, 2007

The foreign media have been escalating their criticism of Prime Minister Abe in connection with the wartime comfort-women issue. In response, the Japanese government yesterday firmed up a decision to transmit to the foreign press and other parts of the media that the prime minister's true intention is to continue the stance in the Kono Statement, while asking the foreign press for space to insert a rebuttal toward the reports that are notQa C